

Boekbekendstellings

Meltzer, J.L. 1994. **The Growth of Cape Town Commerce and the Role of John Fairbairn's *Advertiser* (1835-1859)**. Argiefjaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis. Jaargang 57:89-235. Pretoria : Staatsdrukker.

This thesis basically traces the expansion of commerce in Cape Town with particular reference to company growth from 1835 to 1859.

Situated within the field of economic history, the nature of the study is primarily economic, though it attempts to avoid any narrow economic determinism, accepting the basic premise that the most useful method remains an interdisciplinary approach. The content, however, acknowledges the importance of class in historical interpretation. The commercial bourgeoisie (defined as wholesale merchants, wholesalers-retailers and financiers) thus assumes a central place in discussion.

Yet, inextricably bound up with the history of commerce during the period is the editorial role of John Fairbairn. This connection was immediately apparent, once one began reading Cape Town's leading newspaper, the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, of which Fairbairn was sole editor between 1835 and 1859. His comments in the paper's editorial columns reveal his intense interest in and his identification with commercial developments. His commercial orientation, whether in debates concerning the advantages of free trade, slave emancipation, the usury law, joint-stock companies or in his reporting of relevant extracts from overseas newspapers, government economic statistics and company reports, led to the coupling in this thesis of the role of John Fairbairn with the history of commerce. Indeed it is the years of Fairbairn's sole editorship which provided one of the most important reasons for the chronological framework employed in the study, viz. 1835-1859. Despite the importance with which historians regard Fairbairn, it is surprising how little his role in the economic sphere has been acknowledged, when considering the vigour of the economic campaigns he conducted in his newspaper.

The basic source utilised was the *Advertiser*, Fairbairn's newspaper. Recourse was also made to the *Zuid-Afrikaan*, as organ of Dutch/Afrikaans middle class opinion. Numerous official and unofficial manuscripts were examined. Use was made of official publications, as well as companies' privately-held archives.

By the end of the period covered in this thesis, Cape Town had evolved from the 'sleepy hollow' it had been in the 1820s to a bustling port and centre of

commerce. In these processes, Fairbairn through the medium of the *Advertiser*, had played a considerable role.

Brown, M.M. 1994. **Die Children's Friend Society in Engeland en die Kaap die Goeie Hoop, 1830-1841.** Argiefjaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis. Jaargang 57:1-83. Pretoria : Staatsdrukker.

Die *Children's Friend Society* (CFS) was 'n liefdadigheidsorganisasie wat in 1830 in Londen deur 'n groep evangeliesgesinde filantropie gestig en tot sy einde in 1841 deur hulle bedryf is. Die doel van hierdie vereniging was om arm stedelike kinders deur middel van 'n hervormingsprogram op te hef ten einde van hulle nuttige lede van die Britse arbeiderskorps te maak. Die kinders, bekend as Emigrantekinders, is eventueel vanuit die CFS se tehuise na die Kaapkolonie gestuur om daar tot die kolonie se arbeiderskorps toe te tree en die Britse element te versterk.

'n Doelwit van die CFS was ook die morele opheffing van die kinders – iets wat nie gerealiseer het nie, omdat die werkgewers wat meestal slawe-eienaars was, ook ander gekleurde arbeiders in diens gehad het. In dié verband het twee faktore die ideaal van die vereniging in die wiele gery. Hoewel die ordonansie onderskei het tussen die inheemse ingeboekte arbeiders en die ingeboekte Emigrantekinders, is dit te betwyfel of die Kaapse werkgewers daarop ag geslaan het. Die “nuwe” kategorie ingeboekte arbeiders is nie anders behandel as dié waarmee die werkgewers vertrou was nie. Die inboekkontrak het daarom nie die opheffing van Emigrantekinders deur hulle Kaapse werkgewers gewaarborg nie.

Die idealisme van die CFS en sy propagandiste het te kort geskiet aan realisme en gevolglik kon al die goeie bedoelings in die lig van voorafgaande nie slaag nie. Dit is duidelik dat CFS hom nie altyd van die werklike oorsake van die probleem van stedelike armoede en die uitvoering van die opheffingsprogram vergewis het nie en die opheffing te eenvoudig wou bewerk.

Die ervaring van die CFS aan die Kaap het ten slotte 'n indirekte positiewe invloed op toekomstige wetgewing in verband met werkgewers en arbeiders in die kolonie gehad. In 1841 is inboekperiodes byvoorbeeld verkort en alleen noodlydende kinders onder tien jaar oud kon ingeboek word.

Die navorsing oor die CFS is in diverse argiefbewaarplekke en biblioteke in Brittanje en Suid-Afrika onderneem. Die argief van die CFS, 'n privaat organisasie, het ongelukkig nie bewaar gebly nie. Sy werksaamhede is desnieteenstaande bykans volledig in die Britse Koerante soos *The Times* en *The Morning Post* en in die Kaapkolonie in die *South African Commercial Advertiser*

gerapporteer en is in Brittanje en Suid-Afrika nagevors. Diverse korrespondensie van die vereniging het as gepubliseerde argivalia die lig gesien en is in genoemde bewaarplekke in Brittanje opgespoor en geraadpleeg.